

Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani and Monica Simon (Vermont MH PIP)
Vicki Hornus (Vermont Dept. of Education)

DATE: May 24, 2002

RE: Test Participation for IEP Students

The attached graph and table provide a comparison of the rate at which students with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) in each of four disability categories participated in the Mathematics *Skills* Assessment of Vermont's statewide New Standards Reference Exam program during 1998 through 2001. The analysis focuses on Vermont's four largest IEP disability categories: Emotional Behavioral (EBD), Specific Learning (SLD), Speech/Language (SLI), and Learning Impaired (LI). A brief description of special education eligibility criteria in Vermont and descriptions of these disabilities are attached.

Test participation, for this analysis, is defined by completion of the mathematics test on grade level or one year behind grade level. Reasons for not taking the test may include being excused from testing, being two years or more behind grade level, and absence from school on the day of the test, and others. School drop out rates should not have substantially influenced the rate of test participation because almost all students on an IEP were in school during the test year. The test participation rates reported here should not be compared to the test participation rates for mental health and other children's service recipients reported earlier because the participation rates reported earlier were computed as a percent of all Vermont residents in the relevant age group, but the participation rates reported here are computed as a percent of only those students on an IEP. The participation rates reported here can be compared to the overall 96% participation rate reported by the Department of Education for enrolled students.

As you will see, only about 50% of students in any of the four disability categories participated in testing at the fourth grade level. At the eighth grade level, the participation rates for student with SLD and SLI remained at about 50%, but the participation rates for students with EBD and LI decreased to the 30% range. Finally, at the tenth grade level, participation rates for students with SLD and SLI decreased to the 40% range and participation rates for students with EBD and LI decreased into the 20% range.

We will be very interested in hearing your thoughts about the dynamics underlying the differences in test participation rates for different disability groups that were observed in this study. Are students with EBD and LI more likely to be excused from testing than students with SLD and SLI? Are they more likely to be behind the expected grade level more than two years? Is there another explanation for the observed differences? Please send your comments and suggestions for further analyses to edtestresearch@ddmhs.state.vt.us or call 802-241-2638.

Eligibility for Special Education

A child/student is eligible for special education if:

1. He or she has a disability – meets criteria for one of 12 disabilities outlined in Vermont regulations.
2. The disability results in an adverse effect on the child's educational performance in one or more of the basic skill areas.
3. The student needs special education services to benefit from his/her educational program and this support cannot be provided through the educational support system, standard instructional conditions, or supplementary aids and services provided in the school.

Selected disability definitions

Learning Impairment – delay or impairment in learning that causes student's performance on test of intellectual ability to fall at or below 1.5 standard deviations below the mean (IQ of 78 or less) AND student has concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior.

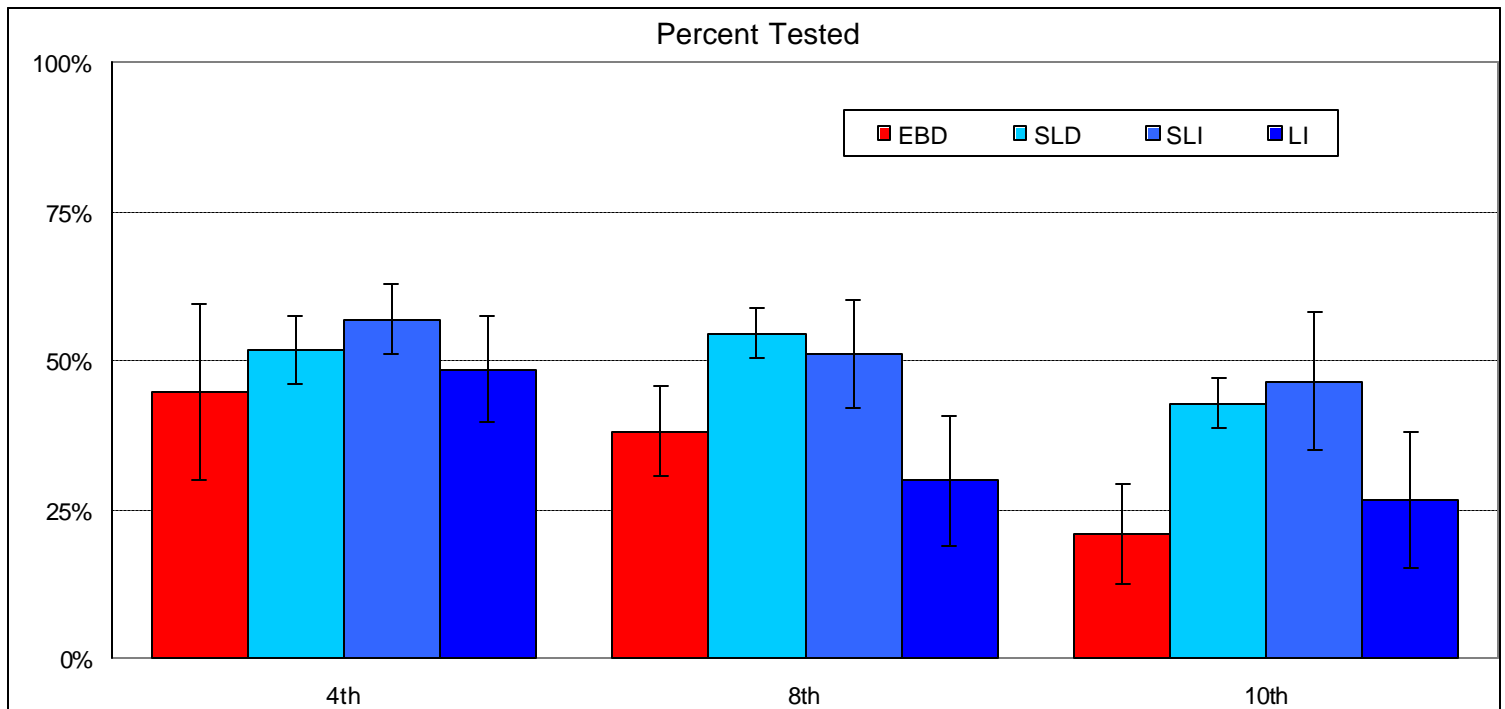
Specific Learning Disability – disability of a perceptual, conceptual, or coordinative nature demonstrated by a severe discrepancy between ability and achievement in one or more basic skill areas -- oral or written expression, reading or listening comprehension, reading skills, math calculation or math reasoning. (Severe discrepancy must be greater than 1.5 S.D. below expected achievement for given ability.)

Speech or Language Impairment – significant deficits in listening comprehension or oral expression, evaluated by licensed SLP.

Emotional Disturbance – a condition, including schizophrenia, exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree:

1. Inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors.
2. Inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teacher.
3. Inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances.
4. General pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
5. Tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

School Participation in Statewide Mathematics Skills Assessment for Young People with an Individualized Education Plan 1998 - 2001



	Individualized Education Plan		
	Number Served	Number Tested	Percent Tested
4th Grade			
Emotional/Behavioral Disability - EBD	130 ± 2	58 ± 19	45% ± 15%
Specific Learning Disability - SLD	553 ± 6	286 ± 32	52% ± 6%
Speech/Language Impaired - SLI	242 ± 3	137 ± 14	57% ± 6%
Learning Impaired - LI	125 ± 2	61 ± 11	49% ± 9%
8th Grade			
Emotional/Behavioral Disability - EBD	247 ± 3	94 ± 19	38% ± 8%
Specific Learning Disability - SLD	610 ± 7	333 ± 26	55% ± 4%
Speech/Language Impaired - SLI	162 ± 2	83 ± 15	51% ± 9%
Learning Impaired - LI	149 ± 2	44 ± 16	30% ± 11%
10th Grade			
Emotional/Behavioral Disability - EBD	271 ± 3	57 ± 22	21% ± 8%
Specific Learning Disability - SLD	524 ± 6	224 ± 23	43% ± 4%
Speech/Language Impaired - SLI	120 ± 2	56 ± 14	47% ± 12%
Learning Impaired - LI	138 ± 2	37 ± 16	27% ± 11%

Test Participation includes young people who completed the New Standards Reference Exam. Analysis is based on data provided by The Department of Education. Because these data sets do not share unique person identifiers, Probabilistic Population Estimation was used to provide unduplicated counts of individuals shared across data sets (with 95% confidence intervals).